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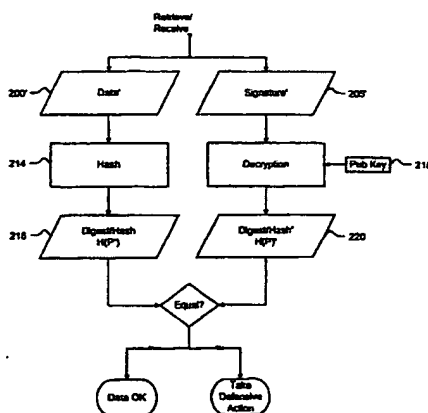
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(54) Title: METHOD AND SYSTEMS FOR PROTECTING DATA USING DIGITAL SIGNATURE AND WATERMARK



(57) Abstract: A relatively hard-to-remove, easy-to-detect, strong watermark is inserted in a data signal. The data signal is divided into a sequence of blocks, and a digital signature for each block is embedded in the signal via a watermark. When a user attempts to access or use a portion of the data signal, the signal is checked for the presence of a watermark containing the digital signature for the desired portion of the signal. If the watermark is found, the digital signature is extracted and used to verify the authenticity of the desired portion of the signal. If the signature-containing watermark is not found, the signal is checked for the presence of the strong watermark. If the strong watermark is found, further use of the signal is inhibited, as the presence of the strong watermark, in combination with the absence or corruption of the signature-containing watermark, provides evidence that the signal has been improperly modified. If, on the other hand, the strong mark is not found, further use of the data signal can be allowed.